



CONTACT:

Caroline Wellford

caroline@cstrategies.com

901-216-7657

LINK SCHOLARS PARTNER WITH IDEO INDUSTRY LEADERS FOR YOUTH DESIGN LAB

Chicago Scholars participate in hands-on program to support interest in design

CHICAGO – Today, high school students from LINK Unlimited Scholars (LINK) completed a week-long Youth Design Program with IDEO, a global design and innovation company. LINK Scholars participated in a design workshop that provided them with the opportunity to learn directly from some of the industry’s most experienced and influential designers. The Youth Design Lab is a deep dive into Design Thinking, a process for creative problem solving that at its core focuses on people. The lab is a hands-on experience that allows youth designers to work on a real design challenge with professional designers at IDEO.

“We are thrilled to partner with IDEO to help expand the horizons of our Scholars,” said Jonathan T. Swain, President and CEO, LINK Unlimited Scholars. “This virtual workshop serves as an introduction to the world of design and connects our Scholars with some of the leading professionals in the tech and design sphere. We look forward to seeing how this experience will shape the future studies and careers of Scholars in the years to come.”

LINK Unlimited Scholars changes the life trajectory of outstanding Black high-school students through a four-year fellowship. This model closes the opportunity gaps and ensures the long-term economic stability for its Scholars. Throughout their fellowship, LINK Scholars engage in programming for academic enrichment, leadership development, career exposure and college access. Since 2000, 100% of LINK’s senior Scholars have graduated high school with acceptance into selective colleges and universities. A unique component of LINK’s fellowship is one-on-one mentorship for each Scholar. Mentors walk with Scholars for their entire four-year journey, providing invaluable guidance, access to their network, and support during college application and selection, resulting in a lifelong bond for many Mentor-Scholar pairings. For over fifty years, LINK has successfully supported Scholars throughout the city as they move to, through, and beyond college.

LINK originally connected with IDEO in 2019 to serve as the inaugural community partner for IDEO’s first-ever design camp outside the San Francisco Bay Area as part of its concentrated effort to reach communities that historically have not been exposed to opportunities in design. IDEO collaborated closely with the LINK team to create a program that centered around the specific needs and interests of the organization’s Scholars.

Youth Design Lab’s purpose is to expand access to design at an earlier age to young people from diverse communities, especially communities of color. One of IDEO’s core design principles is to proactively foster enduring relationships with local organizations that serve communities of color to increase access and create more opportunities in the design industry.

About LINK Unlimited Scholars:

LINK Unlimited Scholars provides high-potential Black students in Chicago with the resources and tools they need to change the trajectory of their future through a four-year high school fellowship that moves them to, through and beyond college. For more information, visit linkunlimited.org.

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